

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 15-17, 19, 31, 32, 34-36, 41-44, and 47 have been amended, and claims 11 and 33 have been canceled. Claims 1-10, 12-32, and 34-49 are now pending in the application. Applicant respectfully requests reexamination and reconsideration of the application.

Initially, Applicant notes that this response is being filed within two months of the mailing date of the final Office Action. Therefore, pursuant to MPEP § 706.07(f), Applicant requests that, if the examiner takes action with regard to this Response after January 24, 2004, the shortened statutory period for reply be reset as set forth in the PTO's form paragraph 7.67.02. (See MPEP § 706.07(f), pg. 700-77, 1st column, paragraph "(F).")

Applicant requests entry of this amendment because the amendment cancels some claims and clearly places all remaining claims in condition for allowance. More specifically, claims 11 and 33 are canceled. Claims 17, 19, 32, 34-36, 42-44, and 47, all of which were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were otherwise identified as being allowable, have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. All other pending claims were either identified in the final Office Action as allowable or now depend from a claim that was identified as allowable or as containing allowable subject matter. Therefore, all pending claims are clearly in condition for allowance.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-10 and 21-30 are allowable and claims 17-20, 32, 34-36, and 42-49 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. As mentioned above, Applicant has rewritten 17, 19, 32, 34-36, 42-44, and 47 in independent form, and claims 18, 20, 45, 46, 48, and 49 depend from one of the foregoing claims. Therefore, claims 1-10, 17-30, 32, 34-36, and 42-49 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 33 and 37-41 were rejected as anticipated by US Patent No. 6,584,678 to Burgess ("Burgess"), and claims 11-16 and 31 were rejected as anticipated by US Patent No. 6,436,802 to Khoury ("Khoury"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

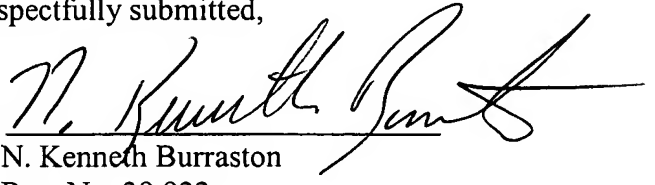
Claims 11 and 33 have been canceled without prejudice, mooting the rejection of those claims. Claims 12-16, 31, and 37-41 now depend from a claim that, as discussed above, is in condition for allowance. Therefore, claims 12-16, 31, and 37-41 are now also in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that all of the claims are allowable and the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicant's attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (801) 536-6763.

Respectfully submitted,

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